



[Press Release]



Date: April 18, 2003

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Farmington Board of Education receives national Kennedy Center Alliance Art Award

Farmington Hills, Michigan—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts announced today that Farmington Public Schools Board of Education and the South Carolina's Beaufort County School District Board of Education have been chosen to receive the 15th annual Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network (KCAEN) and National School Boards Association (NSBA) Award. The districts were singled out for their outstanding support of high-quality arts education. The Farmington School Board was nominated by ArtServe Michigan and Michigan Association of School Boards. The award was presented on April 8, 2003 at the National School Board Association's annual conference in San Francisco, California. Farmington school board members Frank L. Reid and Priscilla L. Brouillette were on hand to receive the award. Since 1989, this prestigious award has nationally recognized 33 school boards in 23 states in their support of arts education.

In announcing this year's winners, Derek E. Gordon, Senior Vice President of the Kennedy Center, said "This year's winners reflect an extraordinary commitment on the part of school boards, superintendents, principals, faculty, and community leaders to providing opportunities for their students to study the arts as part of a comprehensive education. We are proud to acknowledge their outstanding work in partnership with the National School Boards Association."

A national review panel is convened to select the school district that receives the honor each year. School districts selected for this honor must demonstrate support for all four artistic disciplines in their arts education program including visual arts, music, theater and dance. Instruction and programming must also be available for all students throughout the district. The ways in which the school district develops collaborative partnerships with the cultural resources available in the community is also important consideration in reviewing nominations.

The Board of Education has identified significant resources for its arts education program, which serves more than 12,000 students in the district's 27 schools. The Board provides strong financial support to the arts, allocating 5.25 percent of the total annual budget and 9.45 percent of the total instructional budget to its arts education programs. The Board employs 72 full-time arts teachers in addition to a full-time director of fine arts.

Curriculum offerings began at the elementary level, with weekly instruction in general music and art required through the fifth grade. Choir and instrumental music are initially offered at the fourth and fifth grade levels, respectively, with 80 percent of all fifth grade students electing instrumental music. Art and general music are required for all sixth and seventh grade students. Band, choir, orchestra and theater classes round out the middle school offerings. More than half of all middle school students play in the band or orchestra in addition to singing in the choir. More than 20 percent of high school students are in a performing ensemble. The district's two full-time dance faculty teach 11 sections of four high school-level dance classes. Additional opportunities for studying dance include residencies and performances presented by such renowned companies as the Martha Graham Dance Company, the Dance Theater of Harlem and Garth Fagan Dance. Both acting and technical aspects of theater are offered at the high school level, including an annual school/community musical production. The arts are also integrated into the core curriculum at every grade level. All high school students complete a minimum of one fine arts class as part of the district's graduation requirements.

The District's community partnerships include guest clinics with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra for middle and high school students, ongoing partnerships with more than 60 local businesses where framed student artwork is displayed on a rotating basis, collaborations with the Farmington Community Arts Council in conjunction with the District's Fine Arts Council, and funding support from GMAC.

The Farmington Public Schools music education program was named the best in America in the nationwide survey, "The Best 100 Communities for Music Education in 2000."



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